

THE MIRACLE AND ITS COSTS

- UNITED STATES PENETRATION OF BRAZIL.* By JAN KNIPPERS BLACK. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977. Pp. 313. \$14.00.)
- VICTIMS OF THE MIRACLE: DEVELOPMENT AND THE INDIANS OF BRAZIL.* By SHELTON H. DAVIS. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977. Pp. 205. \$14.95.)
- CITIES AND FRONTIERS IN BRAZIL: REGIONAL DIMENSIONS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.* By MARTIN T. KATZMAN. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977. Pp. 255. \$16.50.)
- BRAZIL'S MULTILATERAL RELATIONS: BETWEEN FIRST AND THIRD WORLDS.* By WAYNE A. SELCHER. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1978. Pp. 301. \$17.00.)
- FORMAÇÃO ECONÔMICA DO BRASIL: A EXPERIÊNCIA DA INDUSTRIALIZAÇÃO.* Edited by FLAVIO RABELO VERSIANI and JOSÉ ROBERTO MENDONÇA DE BARROS. (São Paulo: Editora Saraiva, 1977; série ANPEC de leituras de Economia. Pp. 410.)

In the early seventies, Brazil was known for the "miracle" of its economic development, as well as for the ruthlessness with which this development seemed to have been carried on. The miracle was represented by the impressive rates of economic growth, the overall modernization of the country's administrative and financial apparatus, and the expansion of Brazil's export capabilities both of primary and industrialized goods. The ruthlessness was chiefly dramatized by the climate of political repression, the country's inability to incorporate the majority of its population into its modernized sector, the disregard for problems of urban deterioration and damage to the environment, and the lack of concern for the fate of minorities, the Indian population above all. Also, Brazil's growing foreign indebtedness and the increasing participation of multinational, mostly American, corporations in the country's internal market were seen as indications of the progressive alienation of Brazil's independence in exchange for foreign resources. Caught between official praise and denunciation, the Brazilian "miracle" was left, for the most, unanalyzed.

Some of the books reviewed here are part of a large body of literature concerned chiefly with the denunciation of the miracle and its costs. Jan Knippers Black's *United States Penetration in Brazil* points the finger at the main villain, the United States. Her work is an extensive description of U.S. involvement in Brazilian politics before the 1964 coup d'état and the twelve years that followed it. In the best tradition of investigative journalism, she goes after all kinds of evidence that can prove her point, and she does it: in fact, the United States was deeply involved in Brazilian politics during all that time. What she does not answer, however, is how essential was this involvement for the success of the 1964 coup and the orientation of Brazil's internal and foreign policies afterwards. She deals with this problem at the conclusion, but leaves it unanswered: "we do not know whether such a coup would have occurred and whether the military regime would have become so firmly entrenched if the United States position in

1964 had been neutral or opposed to the conspiracy." She quotes Celso Furtado, with whom she agrees, as one that doubted that the coup would have been successful.

This belief in the effectiveness of U.S. intervention, however, is not shared by most Brazilian political analysts, who tend to see the fall of the Goulart regime as the culmination of an internal process of political radicalization that had very little organizational and mobilizational resources at the left's side. It is of course impossible to measure how decisive was the U.S. help to the conservative side. As the word itself implies, "destabilization" works better when the situation has already deteriorated and a good push can be decisive. But international experience has shown that U.S. (or other) interventions can be ineffective when the country's internal situation is not already tipped in the same direction. In a curious and unintended way, Black's book seems to give support to those at the opposite ideological end that also believe in the omnipotence of U.S. mischievousness. To bring this omnipotence to its proper measure can help reduce U.S. adventurism abroad, and also help those at the receiving end to gain a better understanding of their own capacity for self-determination.

Wayne A. Selcher's *Brazil's Multilateral Relations* is interesting to read in contrast with Black's work. Selcher wrote the book originally under the auspices of the U.S. Department of State, and his perspective from inside the U.S. government pictures Brazil as a much more independent and self-directed nation than Black would lead us to believe. For him, Brazil is an upwardly mobile country, attempting to become a major power, and "trying to remain unfettered by international obligations or international consensus unfavorable to its interests, while at the same time seeking to avoid isolation." "The perceptions of its foreign policy decision-makers are strongly influenced by a *Realpolitik* which is suspicious of supranationalism . . ." (p. 279). The data that support this assertion cover all spheres of Brazil's foreign policy, including its participation in international governmental organizations (IGO), its policies on the issues of resources, trade, commodity agreements, and financial institutions, and its growing involvement with the African continent. Its main limitation is probably that the book remains at the level of explicit governmental policies, statements, voting patterns and financial involvements with IGOs, without attempting to go behind the official surface. But it would be a serious mistake to think that official events such as the Brazil-Germany treaty on nuclear energy or Brazil's denunciation of its program of military cooperation with the U.S. (events that Selcher's book does not analyze) are only superficial attitudes. The facts presented by both Black and Selcher are equally real and significant, and they provide a much more complex view of Brazil's insertion in the contemporary world than any of them, in itself, would suggest.

The other three books address what is happening inside Brazil. Shelton H. Davis's *Victims of the Miracle* deals with a serious subject that has received little attention in Brazil itself: the fate of the country's Indian population when confronted with the expanded frontier of economic development. This is not original research, but a collection of different kinds of evidence, and the book in-

cludes chapters on the post-1940 history of the Brazilian Amazon, the contemporary (post-1970) Indian policy, and the social and ecological effects of the Polamazônia Program from 1975 on. The conclusion of the book is stated in the preface: "the central contention of this book is that the massive amount of disease, death, and human suffering unleashed upon the Brazilian Indians in the last few years is a direct result of the economic development policies of the military government in Brazil" (p. xi). Although the book adds little for those who know something about the Indian drama, there is no denying that it can help to call the attention of a larger public to this reality and, therefore, help to change it. But it is doubtful, and may be detrimental to the understanding of the problem, to assign the responsibility only to the policies of the "military government." Davis's very brief historical review of the problem shows that the destruction of the Brazilian Indian population is a process that has been going on for many years, irrespective of the government in power. This should not be taken as a defense of the military government, but as an assertion that the problem is much deeper, and is not likely to improve simply by a civilian government coming to power. What explains the suffering of the Indian population is the expansion of the country's internal frontier under the conditions of wild, predatory capitalism and land occupation, combined with the historical indifference of Brazil's intellectual, political, and economic leadership for the fate of the Indians.

Martin T. Katzman's *Cities and Frontiers in Brazil* is a collection of original and sometimes brilliant essays on the different fronts along which Brazilian development has been taking place. The adoption of a regionalized approach helps him to avoid extreme generalizations about the "character" of this development, and to provide a complex view of a complex country. He deals with the growth poles in Goiás, the colonization pattern of Paraná, the planning policies for the Amazon and the Northeast, the effects of urbanization and industrial agglomeration, and the overall effects of regional inequalities and concentration of resources. It is impossible to summarize in a few statements the ideas and propositions presented in the book, since it has so many. A few flashes must suffice: about Amazon policies, he states that "the Brazilian government perceives people as an obstacle rather than an asset for development" and he predicts that mining or cattle raising could be more successful than colonization schemes; on the economic policies of the military regimes, he states that, "to a great extent the policy directions of the military government in the arena of regional planning are a continuation of the pre-1964 strategy" (p. 216), with a "capacity to undertake whimsical regional development programs that does not confine itself to authoritarian regimes" (p. 217). At the same time, he shows that authoritarianism made a difference in suppressing minimum wages, which on one hand led to increasing labor absorption by the industrial sector, but on the other, reduced the expected income of potential rural-urban migrants. At the same time, the squelching of the land reform movement in the Northeast might have resulted in less intensive agriculture, less labor absorption in the countryside, and more rural-urban migration.

This kind of complex analysis is not incompatible with critical views of

Brazil's economic development. The advantage of Katzman's book over so many others that are written to prove a point that is already known is that the criticism he provides is much more precise, based on a much better understanding of the reality, and therefore can help to devise alternative policies that are not only well-intended, but also effective.

Political books play important roles, but they are not a substitute for scholarly research. The essays collected by Flavio Rabelo Versiani and José Roberto Mendonça Barros in *Formação Econômica do Brasil* represent a growing number of studies produced in the last ten years or so that are providing a better view of the Brazilian past experience and present possibilities and alternatives. Its two parts deal with the periods before and after the 1929 world crisis, and the authors include well-known Brazilianists, such as Albert Fishlow and Joel Bergsman; a wide array of young Brazilian economists, including Anibal Villela, Wilson Cano, Claudio Haddad, and Delfim Neto; and also studies provided by institutional agencies such as the Brazilian IPEA and the CEPAL-BNDE working group. As a whole, it represents the state of the art on its subject and is an important reference.

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